

NEW YORK AVENUE  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS NO. DC 718

HABS  
DC  
WASH,  
625-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## NEW YORK AVENUE

HABS No. DC-716

Location: This avenue extends on block from the northeast side of Rawlins Park at 18th and E streets, NW, to 17th Street where it is interrupted by the White House Grounds. From the northeast corner of the White House Grounds it extends northeast to the historic city boundary at Florida Avenue.

Owner/Manager: The right-of-way spanning from building line to building line is the property of the U.S. government while the paved roadways, sidewalks, and the planted areas between are under the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia Department of Public Works. Most of the reservations along the avenue are maintained by the National Park Service, but a few are managed by the District of Columbia.

Present Use: Major thoroughfare and artery to Maryland.

Significance: This avenue developed largely according to the L'Enfant/Ellicott Plan of the city as one of the four avenues radiating from the White House.

### PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

#### A. Physical History:

1. Date of plan: 1791, L'Enfant Plan; 1792, Ellicott Plan.
2. Alterations and additions:
  - ca. 1872: Paved with concrete between 18th and Ninth streets and with stone between Ninth and North Capitol streets.
  - 1949: Streetcar tracks paved over.
  - 1951: Avenue closed between 22nd and 23rd streets for construction of the U.S. State Department.
  - 1965: Avenue closed south of Rawlins Park for E Street Expressway and U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

#### B. Historical Context:

On Pierre L'Enfant's 1791 plan of the city, this avenue originates at a site set aside for a fort on the Potomac River and continues northeast to connect with one of the major routes to Maryland. Three blocks northeast of the fort, the avenue crosses over the northern part of a large oblong reservation that extends down to the river. The avenue then continues four more blocks to the large reservation planned for the grounds of the President's House. Two blocks northeast of this, the avenue intersects a large square marked with an "E," indicating it as the site for a grand cascade. Two more blocks to the northeast it intersects Massachusetts Avenue at a square shaded yellow and marked with the "No. 2" (Mount Vernon Square). Nothing special was indicated for the intersection with New Jersey Avenue three more blocks to the northeast. At the end of the avenue at the boundary, L'Enfant indicated a spring or small pond. Inscribing a

straight line from the spring to the President's House, L'Enfant probably envisioned that fresh water could be piped along this avenue to the executive mansion.<sup>1</sup> L'Enfant's dotted line extending the avenue axis beyond the boundary indicates that he intended this road as an artery leading to Maryland.

When Andrew Ellicott redrew the plan in 1792, he basically followed L'Enfant's scheme for this avenue but removed the grand cascade and the shading of the open space at the Massachusetts Avenue intersection. Ellicott also redefined the intersection of New Jersey Avenue as a circle.

As with all of the streets and avenues, the land over which New York Avenue was planned was donated by the original proprietors to the federal government. At the south end, between about 23rd to 18th streets, it ran through a tract of land called the Widow's Mite, part of which had been platted out by Jacob Funk as the town of Hamburg. Northwest of 18th Street, it ran through a large tract of land known as Port Royal, patented to John Peerce from the crown in 1687. By the time the city was laid out, this property was divided among three men, Samuel Davidson, James Peerce, and Joseph Coombs. At its northernmost point, it crossed through a portion of a tract known as the Gleaning, owned by Notley Young.<sup>2</sup>

From the start, New York Avenue was imparted high status because it was one of four avenues radiating from the site chosen for the President's House. Accordingly, it was intended that travelers along the avenue would have a view of the mansion. The southern end of New York Avenue provided access between the President's House and the adjacent Navy Department to the U.S. Naval Observatory between 23rd and 25th streets, NW. Likewise, the segment of the avenue north of the President's House led to the city limits.

Benjamin Tayloe, one of the first Washingtonians to select New York Avenue as his address, commissioned William Thornton to build his elegant brick house, the Octagon, at 18th Street in 1799-1801, one block west of the grounds of the President's House. At the time, the Potomac River flowed just three blocks south of his property so Tayloe could enjoy views of the river. Perhaps it was also due to this proximity to the water, and waterfront nuisances prevalent in the nineteenth century, that the neighborhood around Tayloe's house remained fairly undeveloped into the twentieth century (See Rawlins Park, HABS No. DC-683). Despite the fact that Tayloe had few neighbors, the route was still an important one, and in 1853 the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPB&G), then overseen by the Department of the Interior, requested \$44,000 to grade and gravel the avenue from 17th Street west to the Naval Observatory. This was to include curbstones, gutters, a 6'-wide brick sidewalk, and rows of trees. By 1868, the avenue was described as "partially opened" west of the Navy Department, then on the west side of the White House Grounds.<sup>3</sup>

One of the densest areas of population in the city in the early nineteenth century was farther northeast on New York Avenue around Mount Vernon Square.

---

<sup>1</sup> Delaware Avenue connects this same spring to the Capitol Grounds. L'Enfant's intention to pipe water along the avenues from the spring at the boundary were never realized, probably due to the fact that development did not reach that far north until almost the twentieth century.

<sup>2</sup> McNeil, 42, 43.

<sup>3</sup> Annual Report, ..., 1868, 13.

By the 1860s, the segment of New York Avenue between the President's House and Mount Vernon Square was one of the most populated streets in the city. As early as the 1820s, Washington Presbyterians built a chapel along this stretch between 13th and 14th streets and expanded into a larger church at the same site in 1859. The open space at the intersection of New York and Massachusetts avenues became the site of a thriving market and a fire station in the 1840s (See Mount Vernon Square, HABS No. DC-682).

As the city developed, the OPB&G also recognized the need to identify and beautify the many open spaces created by the superimposition of diagonal avenues over the grid system. When Ellicott numbered the city squares for sale and development in 1792, these small triangles and quadrilaterals remained federal property. In 1855, OPB&G chief engineer B. B. French wrote in his annual report, "There is perhaps no way in which the city of Washington can be so much improved in appearance, by like expenditures, as by the enclosing and improvement of the triangular and circular spaces so wisely reserved to the United States in the laying out of this city . . . they are, indeed, oases in the desert of dusty streets, and brick pavements that surround them." That year, he requested \$1,500 to plant trees and shrubs and erect wood fences in the triangles along New York Avenue. Only three of them, Reservation Nos. 172, 173, and 174 at the intersections of H, I, and Tenth streets were improved, however, before Washington was plunged into the Civil War.

While the war raged between 1861 and 1864, Washington became the home base of the Union forces. Civic improvements were halted and parks intended as recreational "oases" became encampment sites for troops mustered to protect the capital city. Transportation within the city was improved during the war, however, with the incorporation of several streetcar companies. The Columbia Street Railway company installed a line that ran on New York Avenue between the White House and Mount Vernon Square where it veered southeast on Massachusetts Avenue.

At the war's end, Washington's population surge prompted infrastructural improvements in the late 1860s and 1870s. A territorial government was installed between 1871-74, and the Board of Public Works, under Alexander Shepherd, paved and graded miles of unimproved streets. New York Avenue was paved with concrete from Rawlins Park north to Mount Vernon Square and with stone from Mount Vernon Square to North Capitol Street. Although the territorial government made great strides in improving the city's infrastructure, its reign was marred by scandal and criticism. One of its most controversial acts was the demolition of the market at Mount Vernon Square.

By the 1870s, the market had come to be seen as an eyesore and sanitary hazard that impaired improvement of the space for its intended use as a public park. Amid great controversy, Alexander "Boss" Shepherd had it demolished in 1872. Both Massachusetts and New York avenues were paved through the reservation and within the year the OPB&G had improved the four open triangles as parks. A grassy mound at the center featured a fountain.

The OPB&G also landscaped several of the triangles flanking the avenue along the streetcar line, enclosing them with ornamental fences and planting trees, shrubs, and flowerbeds. These improvements were greeted favorably in an article in the Washington Chronicle in 1874: "The market sheds were demolished, which stood on the most central spot in Washington, and in place of those shambles, the magnificent New York Avenue is opened across the new and beautiful Mount Vernon Square, placing in the perspective to the south the new State Department,

President's House and Treasury, magnificently massed together and affording to the north the splendid prospects of grove and hillock around Brentwood."<sup>4</sup> This account was perhaps exaggerated, however, since an 1887 map shows that New York Avenue--although paved with macadam from the White House to L Street--was only a gravel track to the city limits at Florida Avenue.

Although a 1903 map shows only spotty development on the northern reaches of the avenue, by the end of the decade New York Avenue was almost entirely developed. In 1891, the first publicly funded high school for blacks was erected at New York Avenue and M Street. It was designed to accommodate 450 students, but by 1915, with an increase in the African-American population in this region of the city, the school's enrollment numbered 850.<sup>5</sup>

The Eckington and Soldier's Home streetcar line ran along the avenue from Mount Vernon Square to Boundary Street where it bent north and continued to Takoma Park. The double tracks laid down the center of the avenue were flanked by a row of trees that formed a canopy over the roadway. As automobiles gained popularity, they used lanes flanking the central trolley route. At the 14th and 15th Street intersections, large switching towers were erected to control the various streetcars approaching the intersections.<sup>6</sup>

As improved transportation enabled more people to move to the suburbs, the downtown gradually shifted from residential to commercial. Arteries such as New York Avenue became major commuter thoroughfares, and entrepreneurs built garages and gasoline stations to serve the large volume of traffic. The Capital Garage was built in 1926 in response to the parking shortage that would increase over the following decades. Conveniently located near the office and theater districts, the garage was soon joined by the Art Deco-style Greyhound Bus Station between Twelfth and 13th streets.

As light industry and commerce located along the streetcar lines and commuter route, New York Avenue north of Mount Vernon Square was soon lined with laundries, liquor stores, service stations, and warehouses. The traffic and commerce diminished the roadway's residential amenities and the several blocks of turn-of-the-century rowhouses fell to disrepair or were converted as boarding houses. The Great Depression exacerbated the situation and attracted vagrants who congregated in Mount Vernon Square. The head librarian at the Carnegie Library expressed his dismay in a letter to the National Park Service in 1936: "It is pretty discouraging for one who has been head librarian for thirty-one years to see a neighborhood go down as this has."<sup>7</sup>

By the 1940s, the popularity of the automobile spelled the demise of Washington's streetcar lines. Around 1949 the tracks on New York Avenue were paved over and the route was taken over by "freewheeling" public transportation, better known as buses. Civil disturbance in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in April 1968 brought further devastation to New York Avenue as numerous buildings in the blocks east of Mount Vernon Square were burned in

---

<sup>4</sup> Colyer, 113.

<sup>5</sup> Lee, 127-28.

<sup>6</sup> Goode, Capital Losses, 460-61.

<sup>7</sup> Olszewski, 33.

the riots.

After neighborhoods in this area were decimated by deliberate destruction and neglect, the construction of a sunken freeway known as the "center leg," south of the avenue, provided a form of urban clearing. A limited-access "inner loop" freeway was proposed as early as the 1950s to provide a high-speed circuit through the city either elevated above, or depressed beneath the existing grid. Due to growing citizen resistance in the 1960-70s, the Southeast/Southwest freeway (I-395) and the section known as the "center leg" were the only parts constructed. The center leg carries traffic from south of the Capitol on a sunken roadway to New York Avenue at the intersection of Third Street, NW. This entrance ramp from the avenue has added even more congestion to New York Avenue and necessitated wider, improved medians along the roadway in the last decade. The road continues to be a major artery to the Maryland suburbs and the homes lining the streets, as well as the once-formidable Perry School and the Neoclassical Yale Laundry, are now in various states of disrepair. New York Avenue runs through one of the poorer sections of the city. Reservation No. 178 became such a popular gathering place for vagrants that a soup-kitchen truck makes daily stops there to distribute food. Farther south, on the corner of New York Avenue and Seventh Street, mobile homes in one of the vacant squares decimated in the riots serve as homeless shelters.

Farther south, the segment of the avenue between the U.S. Treasury building and Mount Vernon Square has received much redevelopment attention in the past decade. To encourage new development in this neighborhood, the Washington Convention Center was built on the south side of the New York Avenue between Ninth and Eleventh streets in the 1980s. Construction of the mammoth building eliminated four city squares, many of which were occupied by members of Washington's Chinese community. More recently, the facade of the old Greyhound Bus Station between Eleventh and Twelfth streets has been refurbished and transformed into an impressive entry for a massive office building encompassing the entire square. Not so fortunate was the Capital Garage, which was demolished in 1974 to be replaced by another large office building.

While much of New York Avenue north of the White House has suffered from neglect, south of the President's Grounds development has eliminated much of it. While avenues in the city's more populated areas were paved with asphalt, by 1924 this segment was still only paved with macadam, an older, inferior material. Because it held so much undeveloped land, as early as the 1930s Foggy Bottom had been eyed as a site for more federal buildings. Because many departments of the growing government required buildings larger than L'Enfant's city squares, existing roadways were closed to combine adjacent blocks into massive building sites. This was the case of the new State Department Building erected between C, E, 21st, and 23rd streets, NW. When it was built in the 1950s, the two southernmost blocks of New York Avenue were entirely eliminated. Several blocks to the east, the E Street Expressway and the Office of Personnel Management claimed two more blocks of New York Avenue in the 1970s, leaving only one block of the avenue remaining south of the White House.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. Overall dimensions:

1. Width: East of the White House, the avenue is 130' wide from building line

to building line. West of the White House, it is 160' wide.

2. Length within city limits: Within the historic city, New York Avenue is approximately 1.5 miles.

B. Elements within the right-of-way:

1. Roadway: South of the White House, New York Avenue supports two lanes each of two-way traffic. Between the U.S. Treasury and Mount Vernon Square, the two lanes are divided by a brick median. Between 13th and Ninth streets, the wide median is planted with grass and shrubs. From the northwest side of New York Avenue to Florida Avenue, two-way traffic travels in three lanes divided by brick medians.
2. Sidewalks and street trees: The one block that remains south of the White House is consistently planted with mature trees in cutouts and is illuminated by Washington Globe Standard lamps. The sidewalk on the north side of this segment is brick and on the south side is concrete.  
The segment between the Treasury and Mount Vernon Square is illuminated with Washington Double Standards and is planted with immature trees in cutouts. Northeast of Mount Vernon Square, the tree planting scheme is less regular and features intermittent mature pin oaks, and the roadway is illuminated by highway lamps.
3. Large reservations:
  - a. New York Avenue extends from the northeast side of Rawlins Park at 18th Street (See HABS No. DC-683).
  - b. New York Avenue is interrupted by the White House Grounds (See HABS No. DC-689).
  - c. Traffic on the avenue is diverted around Mount Vernon Square between Seventh and Ninth streets (See HABS No. DC-682).
4. Smaller reservations: The following list describes the locations of the reservations identified along this avenue by 1894, the date they were first recognized as federal property, the date of transfer, the date of first improvement, if known, and a description of historical and current appearance as of summer 1990.
  - a. Reservation No. 171: South of the avenue, west of 22nd Street, north of C Street, NW. This reservation was transferred November 15, 1951 by Land Transfer Order No. 1110. It is now encompassed in the site of the U.S. State Department.
  - b. Reservation No. 172: North of the avenue, south of H Street, NW. This triangle abuts City Square No. 251, a site occupied by the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church for more than 150 years, the most recent in a series of churches dates to 1950. By 1872, it was enclosed with a wood picket fence. It was entirely improved during

the OPB&G tenure of O. E. Babcock from 1870-76 and was enclosed by a post-and-chain fence and planted with trees and flowering shrubs. In 1951, 1,470 square feet of the reservation were transferred to the District of Columbia for channelization. Now 3,808 square feet, the reservation is surrounded by quarter-round coping and concrete perimeter sidewalks. It is symmetrically landscaped with a large central area paved in brick protected from the noise of traffic by a continuous deciduous hedge around the perimeter of the park. A brick path leads to the paved area from the west side in front of the church. Metal picket fencing guards the hedge along this path and at the east end of the park. Concrete-support, wood-slat benches face onto the paved area. Several ornamental trees are planted in the park.

- c. Reservation No. 172A: South of the avenue, west of Thirteenth Street, north of H Street, NW. This paved median was added to the list of reservations and numbered in 1916.
- d. Reservation No. 172B: Originally part of Reservation No. 172, this reservation abutting City Square No. 250 separated and renumbered in 1951 when the street configuration at this intersection was channelized. It is now surfaced with brick and planted with trees aligned with H Street.
- e. Reservation No. 173: North of the avenue, east of Twelfth Street, south of I Street, NW. By 1872, this freestanding triangle was enclosed with a wood picket fence. Entirely improved during the OPB&G tenure of O. E. Babcock from 1870-76, this reservation was enclosed with an ornamental wrought-iron railing and planted with low-growing trees and flowering shrubs. By 1894, there was a flowerbed in the center. Today it is surrounded by concrete perimeter walks with tree cuts and quarter-round coping with corner posts. Asphalt pathways are laid along directional lines parallel with Twelfth and I streets forming a large sodded triangular open space. Deciduous hedges are planted between these two paths and the perimeter walks. A contemporary post-and-chain fence runs long the north side of the park. Concrete-support, wood-slat benches face onto the paths and onto the perimeter walk along Twelfth Street.
- f. Reservation No. 174: South of the avenue between Tenth and Eleventh streets, NW. By 1872, this freestanding triangle was enclosed with a wood picket fence. It was entirely improved during the OPB&G tenure of O. E. Babcock from 1870-76 and was enclosed with an ornamental wrought-iron railing and planted with evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. It also featured an imported terra cotta fountain basin with a carved Paris stone center piece and an umbrella jet. It was transferred to the District of Columbia in 1980 for construction of the Convention Center, but because of its significance as a former park, it remains an open space, and is paved and planted with trees in round gridded



openings.

- g. Reservation No. 175: North of the avenue, west of Ninth Street, south of K Street, NW. When this trapezoid abutting City Square 372 was first included on the OPB&G's list in 1884, it was already enclosed with a post-and-chain fence and planted with low-growing deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs and had a central flower bed. By 1902 it was listed as tended by the adjacent property owner. This sodded quadrilateral southwest of Mount Vernon Square is delineated from the concrete perimeter walk by quarter-round coping and features several ornamental trees. A ornamental iron fence surrounds the park with openings near the west side for an asphalt interior path running along the west side.
- h. Reservation No. 176: South of the avenue, east of Seventh Street, north of K Street, NW. When this trapezoid abutting City Square 451 was first included on the OPB&G's list in 1884, it was already enclosed with a post-and-chain fence and planted with "dwarf-growing" deciduous trees and flowering shrubs and had a central flower bed. In 1906 coping was added around the reservation. This reservation northeast of Mount Vernon Square now features a central octagonal area paved with macadam approached by paved paths perpendicular to the three abutting streets. An ornamental iron fence along the paths and paved area and quarter-round coping along the perimeter walks delineate three sodded areas where four ornamental trees are symmetrically planted. The east side features a holly hedge and an interior flagstone path patched in places with concrete.
- i. Reservation No. 177: North of the avenue, east of Fifth Street, south of L Street, NW. Although this reservation is still considered the property of the National Park Service, no semblance of a park remains. The space abuts a square now occupied by a police station, and the site of the reservation is now used as a parking lot.
- j. Reservation No. 177A: This freestanding triangle was transferred from the District of Columbia in 1905 to the OPB&G and was immediately graded and sodded. Its configuration was slightly changed in 1952 when New York Avenue was widened. Today it is entirely paved with concrete.
- k. Reservation No. 178: South of the avenue, east of Fifth Street, north of L Street, NW. Although it was included on the 1884 OPB&G reservation list, this trapezoid abutting City Square No. N515 was not improved until 1902 when it was surrounded with a post-and-chain fence. This reservation was divided into two pieces for road channelization. The segment still abutting N515 is surrounded by perimeter walks and quarter-round concrete coping. The large freestanding section is surrounded by concrete perimeter walks and quarter-round coping and features a large central area paved in concrete. Evergreen hedges are planted around the

perimeter of the park and are protected from the surrounding sidewalk by chain-link fencing. Several large trees shade the park, which also features several concrete-support, wood-slat benches.

1. Reservation No. 179: North of the avenue, west of New Jersey Avenue, east of Third Street, NW. When this trapezoid was first included on the OPB&G's list in 1884, it was already enclosed with a light iron railing and planted in part with deciduous trees and shrubs. It also featured a central fountain with Richmond Granite coping. In 1941 it was reduced by almost 9,000 square feet for the widening of Third Street. The reservation is now separated into two pieces by M Street. Surrounded by brick and concrete perimeter walks, both segments are sodded and feature neat deciduous hedges.
- m. Reservation No. 180: North of the avenue, east of New Jersey Avenue, south of M Street, NW. Although this reservation appeared on the 1887 OPB&G reservation list, it was only graded by 1894. In 1906, the east half of the reservation was transferred to the District of Columbia for street purposes. Today the sodded triangle is surrounded by quarter-round concrete coping and concrete perimeter walks. Although records claim it was transferred to the District of Columbia in 1944, it features a single trash receptacle of the tulip type, found almost exclusively in NPS reservations.
- n. Reservation No. 181: South of the avenue, west of First Street, north of M Street, NW. Although this freestanding triangle was recognized as a reservation in 1872, it was still unimproved by 1887. By 1894 it was enclosed with a post-and-chain fence and partly planted with trees and shrubs. It was divided into two pieces by a road. The large, sodded east segment is surrounded by concrete perimeter walks with tree cuts and quarter-round concrete coping. The smaller west segment is sodded and features several small shrubs.
- o. Reservation No. 182: North of the avenue, south of N Street, NW. This sodded triangle formerly abutted City Square No. 618. Although it was included on the 1884 OPB&G reservation list, it was unimproved until 1902. It has since been divided into two pieces. The sodded segment, which still abuts the square, features a concrete path just east of the building line, concrete perimeter walks, and quarter-round concrete coping. The freestanding section is also surrounded by concrete perimeter walks with cutouts, and quarter-round concrete coping.
- p. Reservation No. 183: South of the avenue, east of North Capitol Street, north of N Street, NE. This triangle formerly abutted City Square No. 671. Although it was included on the 1884 OPB&G reservation list, it was unimproved until 1902, and in 1903, a post-and-chain fence was erected. It has since been divided into two

pieces. Both sections are sodded and surrounded by concrete perimeter walks and quarter-round concrete coping.

- q. Reservation No. 184: North of the avenue, west of First Street, south of D Street, NE. This triangle abutting City Square No. 670 was first listed by the OPB&G in 1887 and was first improved in 1902. In 1904, the wire fence surrounding it was replaced by post-and-chain. It is now sodded and surrounded by concrete perimeter walks with cutouts for trees and quarter-round concrete coping.
  - r. Reservation No. 185: South of the avenue, south of Florida Avenue, north of O Street, NE. This reservation was first identified by the OPB&G in 1884, but by 1910 it was still unimproved, so it was transferred to the District of Columbia for use as a property yard. The act authorized retransfer when "the use of the reservation for park purposes is desirable."<sup>8</sup> The freestanding triangle was never returned to the OPB&G but is now used as a park. It has a sidewalk on the north side and is sodded and planted with three ornamental trees.
- 5. Buildings: Four buildings stand in the line of New York Avenue, NW, The Old Executive Office Building, the White House, and U.S. Treasury between 17th and 15th streets, NW, and the Carnegie Library in Mount Vernon Square between Seventh and Ninth streets.
  - 6. Front yards: The large buildings flanking the segment of New York Avenue west of the White House feature grassy lawns with neat plantings. The roadway is so wide between 15th and Ninth streets that there are no front yards between the sidewalks and the building lines. In the remaining derelict residential segment of the avenue, roughly between Third Street, NW, and North Capitol Street, the townhouses and high-rise, multi-family buildings, have small enclosed front yards. Many of the commercial establishments interspersed among the residences use the open space between the sidewalk and building as parking lots.
- C. Framing elements: Between 18th and Eleventh streets, the right of way is clearly framed by large, mostly modern, commercial and office structures. The right of way is poorly defined northeast of Eleventh Street because the Washington Convention Center was not designed to frame the right of way between Eleventh and Ninth streets and several vacant lots abut the avenue. A few blocks of derelict townhouses are a reminder that the roadway was lined with dwellings in the early part of this century, but many gaps exist along the stretch north of Mount Vernon Square to Florida Avenue.
- D. Vistas: From the northeast corner of Rawlins Park is a clear view to the Old Executive Office Building, which effectively blocks the intended vista of the White House. There is a reciprocal vista from the Carnegie Library in Mount Vernon Square to the U.S Treasury Building, although the latter blocks the

---

<sup>8</sup> Annual Report . . ., 1910, 2659.

intended view to the White House.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Maps:

Baist, G.W. "Baist's Real Estate Atlas Surveys of Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, 1887, 1903, 1913, 1919, 1924, 1932, 1939, 1948, and 1968.

Board of Commissioners. "City of Washington Statistical Map Showing the Different Types of Street Trees." 1880.

Board of Public Works. "Exhibit Chart of Improved Streets and Avenues." 1872.

Boschke, A. "Topographical Map of the District of Columbia surveyed in the years '57, '58, and '59."

Ellicott, Andrew. "Plan of the City of Washington." 1792.

Hopkins, G. "Map of the District of Columbia from Official Records and Actual Surveys." 1887.

L'Enfant, Pierre Charles. "Plan of the City of Washington." 1791.

Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. "Plan of the City of Washington, District of Columbia, showing the Public Reservations." Prepared by Orville E. Babcock. 1871.

Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. "Map of the City of Washington showing the Public Reservations Under Control of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds." 1884, 1887, and 1894.

Toner, Joseph M. "Sketch of Washington in Embryo." 1874.

B. Early Views:

ca. 1927: Survey photographs of each reservation (those of reservations under NPS jurisdiction are in the NPS Reservation Files; those of reservations transferred from NPS to the District of Columbia are in the HSW Reservations Collection).

1948: Photograph of trolley tracks on the avenue at Ninth Street, NW (Goode, 457).

C. Bibliography:

Annual Reports of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1867-1933.

Colyer, George Speer. "The L'Enfant Plan in Downtown Washington: Its History and Prospects for Survival." Master's Thesis, George Washington

University, 1987.

Goode, James M. Capital Losses: A Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Buildings. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979.

Lee, Antoinette J. "Public School Buildings of the District of Columbia, 1804-1930." Unpublished manuscript. 1989.

McNeil, Priscilla W. "Rock Creek Hundred: Land Conveyed for the Federal City." Washington History 3 (Spring/Summer, 1991): 34-51.

Olszewski, George. Mount Vernon Square. Washington, D.C. National Park Service, 1970.

Reservation Files. Office of Land Use. National Capital Region Headquarters. National Park Service.

Reservations Collection. Historical Society of Washington.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Barthold  
Project Historian  
National Park Service  
1993

#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

The Plan of Washington, D.C., project was carried out from 1990-93 by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) Division, Robert J. Kapsch, chief. The project sponsors were the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Inc. of Washington, D.C.; the Historic Preservation Division, District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, which provided Historic Preservation Fund monies; the National Capital Region and its White House Liaison office, NPS; and the National Park Foundation Inc.

HABS historian Sara Amy Leach was the project leader and Elizabeth J. Barthold was project historian. Architectural delineators were: Robert Arzola, HABS; Julianne Jorgensen, University of Maryland; Robert Juskevich, Catholic University of America; Sandra M. E. Leiva, US/ICOMOS-Argentina; and Tomasz Zweich, US/ICOMOS-Poland, Board of Historical Gardens and Palace Conservation. Katherine Grandine served as a data collector. The photographs are by John McWilliams, Atlanta, except for the aerial views, which are by Jack E. Boucher, HABS, courtesy of the U.S. Park Police - Aviation Division.